

To: Allison Ginn[aginn@blm.gov]
From: Ashcroft, Tyler
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BLM Utah CommPlan ActiononMonumentReview TAccomments.docx

Good job. Not an easy task given the uncertainty that we still have. Happy to help polish these products if needed when we have more information.

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Communication Plan

Presidential Action on Secretarial Recommendation for Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and Bears Ears National Monument

INTRODUCTION

BLM Utah manages two national monuments: Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument (GSENM) established by President Clinton in 1996 and Bears Ears National Monument (BENM) established by President Obama in 2016. The establishment of both monuments has been the subject of intense media scrutiny and controversy. In April 2017, President Trump released an Executive Order requesting review of certain monuments, including GSENM and BENM. Secretary Zinke conducted a field visit to both monuments and prepared a recommendation.

President Trump has publicly announced his intention to visit Utah in early December to announce action on the Secretarial recommendations for BENM and GSENM. We anticipate that BLM Utah staff will be questioned about any relevant changes to the two national monuments. This document provides consistent messaging and information to use when responding to both the public and media.

COMMUNICATION GOALS

1. Communicate BLM (and USFS) support of the national monuments review following direction in Presidential Executive Order 13792.
2. Communicate tangible results from presidential action on resources and management within the areas currently managed as BENM and GSENM, focusing on other applicable laws for relevant cultural and natural resources.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

- The public
- Local, state, and federal government agencies
- Tribes
- Local communities (Monticello, Blanding, Bluff, Cortez, Dove Creek, Montezuma Creek, Kanab, Escalante, Big Water, Cannonville)
- Special interest groups
- Nonprofit organizations
- Media
- Industry –energy, grazing, mining
- Recreationists (climbing, mountain biking, rock art/archaeology/paleontology groups, OHV users)

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KEY MESSAGES

1. As part of its review of national monuments, the Department of Interior conducted the first ever formal public comment period regarding monument designations under the Antiquities Act of 1906.
2. Secretary Zinke and key members of his staff also met with stakeholders and local community members on the ground, demonstrating his commitment to hearing from everyone, particularly local voices affected by national monument designations.
3. Any public lands outside of the revised monument boundaries will remain in BLM's stewardship and will be managed according to all relevant laws including the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act, Paleontological Resources Preservation Act, the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. Many of the excluded areas also have special management protections. For example, some excluded lands are managed as Wilderness Study Areas.
4. Existing management plans remain in effect until new plans are developed.
5. Public input is key to sound decision making. Public involvement will be welcomed in future land use planning and NEPA analyses as the agencies implement the new Proclamations. BLM appreciates the time and effort people take in providing comments, as inclusion is vital to managing sustainable, working public lands.

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STRATEGIES

1. Generally, any questions regarding the status of the monument review or Presidential action will be answered using information in DOI press releases. Members of the media will be referred to press_interior@ios.doi.gov.
2. Request that DOI provide Q&A documents for BENM and GSENM.
3. Edit BLM Utah website content to reflect revised monument boundaries, provide copy of Proclamation, etc.

TALKING POINTS**I. Secretarial Review of National Monuments:****In response to media inquiries:**

The Department of Interior is coordinating all media inquiries regarding the monument review. Please contact interior_press@ios.doi.gov.

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If asked about Utah's efforts to transfer federal lands to the state:

In recent statements, Secretary Zinke has firmly restated his opposition to the selling or transferring public lands and the importance of retaining federal ownership of those lands, regardless of any recommendations for modifications to national monuments. These lands and their resources will remain in the stewardship of the BLM and available for public use.

Other questions (Paraphrased or direct quotes from DOI Press Releases):

DOI hosted a formal public comment period on the review from May 12, 2017 to July 10, 2017. We are grateful to everyone that took the time to comment, and to stakeholders that hosted field trips or met with Secretary Zinke. This was the first ever public review and comment for decisions about national monuments created under the Antiquities Act. [The comments received helped inform Secretary Zinke's recommendations to the President.]

On June 12, 2017, Secretary Zinke submitted a 45 day interim report on Bears Ears National Monument to the President. His initial recommendations for Bears Ears included:

- Reconsidering monument boundaries
- Areas with cultural significance be co managed by Tribal Nations
- Congressional action to protect certain areas

The 120 day review included more than 60 meetings with hundreds of advocates and opponents of monument designations, tours of monuments, including Bears Ears and Grand Staircase Escalante, conducted over air, foot, car, and horseback, and a thorough review of more than 2.4 million public comments submitted to the Department on [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov). Additionally, countless more meetings and conversations between senior Interior officials and local, state, Tribal, and non government stakeholders including multiple Tribal listening sessions.

PLACEHOLDER: ADD INFO FROM FINAL SECRETARIAL REPORT/PROCLAMATION

II. Management of archaeological and paleontological resources on all public lands, regardless of monument designation

The Bureau of Land Management manages fossil resources according to the provisions spelled out in the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act (2009), which mandates that fossils on all federal lands be managed according to best scientific principles in order to prevent avoidable losses.

- Federal law prohibits the collection of vertebrate fossils on all public lands without a valid paleontological research permit.

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- BLM generally allows for “casual collecting” of a reasonable amount of common invertebrate and plant paleontological resources for noncommercial personal use when it results in negligible disturbance to the Earth’s surface. However, under [DOI’s Proposed rule at 43 CFR § 49](#), casual collecting of common invertebrate fossils is prohibited in national monuments and certain other special designations.
- For more info, see this [PRPA Fact Sheet](#).

All BLM lands and resources are also subject to the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA), National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). ARPA and NAGPRA protect cultural resources on all public lands from looting and vandalism. NHPA requires BLM to consider the potential effects to cultural resources from proposed actions on public lands and to avoid, minimize, or mitigate effects that are determined to meet the definition of “adverse”. NHPA also provides for important input from consulting parties and the public. NAGPRA to address the rights of American Indians to cultural items, including human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony.

- BLM works closely with tribes and Utah’s State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to manage our nation’s important cultural resources and values.

BLM Utah has stepped up our efforts taking a multi pronged approach as part of the Utah [Respect and Protect Campaign](#), including these successful measures:

- Partnering with groups like Tread Lightly! and Friends of Cedar Mesa to help spread the messages about protecting sites and visiting with respect;
- Strengthening our volunteer and site stewardship programs;
- Encouraging people to report vandalism with hotlines;
- Implementing restoration and site stabilization projects;
- Replacing and enhancing signs;
- Increasing the presence of volunteers and BLM staff in the area; and
- Filling vacant law enforcement positions.

III. Management of mineral resources

The new national monuments are withdrawn from mineral entry, except for valid existing rights that preceded designation. Lands outside of the new monument boundaries will be managed according to the existing land use plans. Future land use plan amendments will determine whether lands outside of the new monument boundaries should be open or closed to leasing or mineral development and the appropriate constraints (e.g., No Surface Occupancy) through the public facing land use planning process

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IV. Management of valid existing rights (pre designation rights of way, leases, water rights, etc.) and grazing

All valid existing rights are honored, regardless of monument designation. Nothing interferes with continued operation or maintenance of rights of way like existing powerlines and pipelines.

Grazing continues to be authorized with the goal of providing forage and maintaining healthy land conditions. There have been no changes to grazing management in either GSENM or BENM since their initial establishment as monuments.

V. Management of Wilderness Study Areas and other special designations, regardless of monument designation

Approximately XX acres of the land outside the new monument boundaries are managed as WSAs. WSAs are roadless areas with wilderness characteristics. The BLM is required to manage these areas to preserve their suitability for designation as wilderness until Congress makes a final determination on whether these areas should be included in the National Wilderness Preservation System. WSAs are also closed to mineral leasing. There are generally no tangible changes in the management of these areas based on the outcome of the monument review.

VI. Management of Wildland Fire, regardless of monument designation

A national monument designation does not change fire management activities. All future management will continue to focus first on public and firefighter safety while taking actions to protect valuable resources. Fuel reduction projects may be implemented in national monuments to address the risk of wildfire, insect infestation, or disease that would imperil public safety or endanger the objects or resources protected by the national monument designation.

VII. PLACEHOLDER: MONUMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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